

What is claimed is:

1. A method for digital imaging of a printing form through application of energy, the printing form having a burn-off area detachably fixed by supporting points in the burn-off area, the supporting points being left in place on the printing form through non-imaging of image spots, the method comprising the steps of:

leaving in place at least one of the supporting points at at least one reference point if a number of image spots to be imaged in a surrounding area of the reference point exceeds a limit value and a boundary area in the surrounding area around the reference point contains only image spots to be imaged; and

detaching burn-off from the burn-off area from the printing form in a cleaning step.

2. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the number of image spots to be imaged in a surrounding area of a reference point is determined in an analysis of the image data represented in digital form as a bit field.

3. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising a calibration step prior to the leaving in place step wherein a geometric shape and extent of the surrounding area and/or the limit value and/or the geometric shape and extent of the boundary area and/or the distance from a first reference point to a second reference point of the at least one reference point is determined.

4. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the at least one reference point includes a plurality of reference points distributed in a uniform grid over a printing area of the printing form.

5. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the distance from a first reference point to a second reference point of the at least one reference point matches an extent of the boundary area.

6. A system for digital imaging of printing forms in a method as recited in claim 1, the system comprising:

an energy source,

a cleaning unit,

a control unit, and

an image processing unit with a computing unit,

wherein in the computing unit of the image processing unit a program is executable, the program having at least one executable step determining whether the limit value has been exceeded at a number of positions in a bit field representing the image data in digital form, the positions corresponding to the reference points.

7. The system as recited in claim 6 wherein the image processing unit includes a raster image processor and a data buffer for the image data represented in digital form as a bit field.
8. The system as recited in claim 6 wherein the program has at least one executable step for modifying the bit field in at least one area at the positions at which the limit value is exceeded.
9. A printing unit comprising a system for imaging as recited in claim 6.
10. A printing press comprising a printing unit as recited in claim 9.